

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 NEAE-00 PA-01 PRS-01 IO-13 SS-15
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TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 8005
INFO AMCONSUL ALEXANDRIA
AMEMBASSY AMMAN IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY BEIRUT IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS IMMEDIATE
USLO RIYADH IMMEDIATE
AMDEL TAIF IMMEDIATE 001
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV IMMEDIATE
USINFO WASHDC IMMEDIATE
NSC WHITE HOUSE IMMEDIATE
USUN USMISSION NEW YORK 4292

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DAMASCUS FOR SECRETARY'S PARTY

NSC FOR DR. BRZEZINKSKI

WHITE HOUSE FOR MR. POWELL

USIA FOR IOP/M

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: OVIP (VANCE, CYRUS R.) EG, IS, XF, US, FR
SUBJECT: AUGUST 4 MEDIA REACTION TO SECRETARY'S VISIT

REF: ALEXANDRIA 871

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SUMMARY: HEAVY COVERAGE OF SECRETARY'S VISIT, DESIGNED FOR BOTH U.S. AND ARAB AUDIENCES, FOCUSES ON EGYPTIAN COUNTER-PROPOSALS (PRINCIPLES FOR PEACE) AND WORKING GROUP ("OFFICIAL SOURCE" CLARIFIES IT IS NOT SUBSTITUTE FOR GENEVA AND NO DIRECT ARAB-ISRAELI MEETING WILL TAKE PLACE). "WORKING GROUP PROPOSAL" ENABLES U.S. TO EXERT ITS EFFORTS IN MORE DIRECT AND EFFECTIVE WAY." PRESS CLAIMS SECRETARY

WILL RETURN TO ALEXANDRIA AUGUST 11 OR 12. NON-OFFICIAL EGYPTIANS DISAPPOINTED THAT NO PROGRESS ON EITHER PROCEDURAL OR SUBSTANTIVE ISSUES APPEARS TO HAVE BEEN MADE. EYES NOW ON ASAD AND ARAFAT (WHO ARRIVED HERE LAST NIGHT). END SUMMARY.

1. MASSIVE AUGUST 4 COVERAGE OF SECRETARY'S VISIT FOCUSES ON GOE STATEMENT TO SECRETARY OF "PRINCIPLES NECESSARY FOR MIDDLE EAST PEACE". PRINCIPLES "CONTAINED IN WORKING PAPER PRESENTED TO SECRETARY" ARE: (1) END TO OCCUPATION OF ALL ARAB TERRITORIES; (2) REALIZATION OF PALESTINIAN RIGHTS INCLUDING RIGHT TO ESTABLISH OWN STATE; (3) RIGHT OF EACH STATE IN AREA TO LIVE PEACEFULLY WITHIN SECURE, INTERNATIONALLY GUARANTEED BORDERS THROUGH AGREEMENT ON APPROPRIATE SECURITY ARRANGEMENTS FOR BORDERS AND INTERNATIONAL POLITICAL GUARANTEES; AND (4) PLEDGE BY ALL STATES IN AREA TO CONDUCT RELATIONS IN ACCORDANCE WITH PROVISIONS OF UN CHARTER, PARTICULARLY TO ABJURE USE OF FORCE AND TO SOLVE DIFFERENCES THROUGH PEACEFUL MEANS. PAPERS SUGGEST EGYPTIAN WORKING PAPER STATES THAT, IF PRINCIPLES ACCEPTED BY ALL PARTIES, EGYPT WILLING TO SIGN PEACE AGREEMENT WITH ISRAEL SIMULTANEOUSLY WITH "OTHER CONCERNED ARAB PARTIES."

2. WORKING GROUP. MEDIA, QUOTING "OFFICIAL EGYPTIAN LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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SOURCE", TOOK PAINS TO STRESS THAT WORKING GROUP IS NOT RPT NOT SUBSTITUTE FOR GENEVA CONFERENCE AND THAT ITS TASK WILL BE TO CONTINUE U.S. CONSULTATIONS WITH ARAB AND ISRAELI SIDES IN PREPARATION FOR PEACE NEGOTIATIONS. THE OFFICIAL SOURCE SAID THERE WILL BE "NO JOINT MEETING BETWEEN ARABS AND ISRAEL." ACCORDING SOURCE, EGYPTIAN PROPOSAL CALLS FOR GROUP TO BEGIN ITS WORK SEPTEMBER 15 IN NEW YORK OR WASHINGTON, WHEN FONMINS WILL BE ATTENDING UNGA. (SENIOR FAHMY STAFFER CONFIRMS FAHMY WILL BE IN NEW YORK FOR UNGA.) AKHBAR REPORTS THAT SADAT PROPOSAL FOR FORMATION OF WORKING GROUP CAME AS SURPRISE TO U.S. PROPOSAL "SAVED VANCE'S TRIP WHICH WAS PROCEEDING INTO BLIND ALLEY". ACCORDING TO AKHBAR, EGYPTIAN PROPOSAL MADE DURING FIRST ROUND OF TALKS. SECRETARY THEN PLACED URGENT TELEPHONE CALL TO WHITE HOUSE WHICH RESPONDED FOLLOWING DAY WITH DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSAL AS "EXCELLENT." SECRETARY THEN ANNOUNCED ACCEPTANCE OF IDEA AT AUGUST 2 PRESS CONFERENCE.

4. RETURN VISIT TO EGYPT. PAPERS SAY IT NOW DEFINITE THAT SECRETARY RETURNING TO ALEXANDRIA AUGUST 11 OR 12 FOR FINAL CONSULTATIONS BEFORE RETURNING TO WASHINGTON.

5. ARAB ACTIVITY. PAPERS ALSO REPORT PROMINENTLY THAT SADAT HAS URGENTLY CONVEYED REPORTS OF HIS DISCUSSIONS WITH SECRETARY TO ARAB LEADERS AND PLO. ARAFAT ARRIVED IN CAIRO MIDNIGHT AUGUST 3 FOLLOWING SERIES OF TALKS WITH SAUDI KING KHALID, CROWN PRINCE FAHD AND ASAD. ARAFAT REPORTEDLY LEADING IMPORTANT DELEGATION AND WILL MEET WITH SADAT TODAY.

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6. LEBANON. PRESS BRIEFLY NOTES SECRETARY'S ARRIVAL IN BEIRUT, REPORTING DISCUSSIONS INCLUDED "PROBLEM OF UN FORCES." REPORTED SECRETARY SAID LEBANESE GOVERNMENT

MUST MAKE DECISION (ON UN FORCES) AND INFORM U.S. OF ITS STAND. SECRETARY ALSO DISCUSSED AID FOR LEBANON, SPECIFICALLY LOAN OF 100 MILLION DOLLARS IN TWO IN-LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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STALLMENTS FOR RECONSTRUCTION OF LEBANESE ARMED FORCES. ALSO REMARKED THAT LEBANESE PARTICIPATION IN GENEVA CONFERENCE WOULD BE USEFUL.

7. SYRIA. LATE-BREAKING NEWS OF SECRETARY'S ARRIVAL DAMASCUS, WHERE HE EXPECTED TO DISCUSS WORKING GROUP PROPOSAL, COVERED BRIEFLY WITHOUT COMMENT.

8. FRANCE. ONLY OTHER NEWS ON MIDDLE EAST AUGUST 4 WAS PAGE ONE REPORT OF BURGEONING "CRISIS" IN FRANCO-ISRAELI RELATIONS. ACCORDING NEWS AGENCIES FROM JERUSALEM, CHANCES FOR IMPROVEMENT IN BILATERAL RELATIONS SET BACK BY ISRAELI PROTEST OVER FRENCH DECISION TO ADHERE TO PROVISIONS OF ARAB BOYCOTT. REPORTEDLY DAYAN HAS WARNED FRANCE THAT DECISION IS HOSTILE ACT AGAINST ISRAEL.

9. COMMENTARY. TREATMENT BUSINESSLIKE. ONLY EDITORIAL WAS IN AHRAH WHICH STRESSED THAT EGYPTIAN POSITION UNCHANGED BY SECRETARY'S VISIT. CLAIMED THAT CIRCUMSTANCES HAVE MADE FORMATION OF WORKING GROUP INEVITABLE IF GENEVA TO MEET BEFORE END OF YEAR. U.S. PROPOSALS, WHETHER ORIGINATED IN WASHINGTON OR SUGGESTED BY BEGIN, NOT ACCEPTABLE TO EGYPT. EGYPTIAN STAND NOT NEGATIVE, HOWEVER, FOR IT HAD OFFERED COUNTERPROPOSALS (PRINCIPLES LISTED PARA 1) AND MADE THEM CLEAR TO SECRETARY. SADAT'S IDEA OF WORKING GROUP THEREFORE PARTICULARLY IMPORTANT, "BOTH FROM POINT OF VIEW OF PROCEDURE OR SUBSTANCE" IF MINIMUM DEGREE OF AGREEMENT ON BASIS FOR GENEVA IS TO BE ARRIVED AT AND CONFERENCE PLACED ON RIGHT TRACK. PROPOSAL ALSO "ENABLES U.S. TO EXERT ITS EFFORTS IN MORE DIRECT AND EFFECTIVE WAY."

10. COMMENT: GOE-DIRECTED MEDIA TREATMENT OF VISIT
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DESIGNED TO PUT EGYPT IN BEST POSSIBLE LIGHT FOR BOTH U.S. AND ARAB AUDIENCES. ALTHOUGH U.S. PROPOSALS "REJECTED", SADAT PORTRAYED AS DEMONSTRATING HIS SINCERE DESIRE FOR PEACE BY COMING UP NOT ONLY WITH HIS OWN PROPOSALS, BUT WITH "WORKING GROUP" CONCEPT WHICH ASSISTS U.S. IN MAINTAINING "MOMENTUM" OF PEACE

PROCESS. AT SAME TIME, RESPONSIBILITY FOR BRINGING PARTIES TOGETHER AT GENEVA SQUARELY PLACED ON U.S. SHOULDERS. FOR ARABS, SADAT HAS STUCK BY BASIC "PRINCIPLES" AND, LEST THERE BE MISUNDERSTANDING THAT WORKING GROUP IS SUBSTITUTE FOR GENEVA, "OFFICIAL SOURCE" CLARIFIED THAT THERE WILL BE NO DIRECT ARAB-ISRAELI CONTACT IN NEW YORK OR WASHINGTON.

1. PRIVATELY, EGYPTIANS NOT INVOLVED IN NEGOTIATIONS ARE EXPRESSING DISAPPOINTMENT THAT NOT PROGRESS APPEARS TO HAVE RESULTED FROM VISIT IN RESOLVING EITHER PROCEDURAL OR SUBSTANTIVE ISSUES. "WORKING GROUP" IS SEEN, AT BEST, AS DEVICE TO BUY SOME TIME AND GIVE APPEARANCE OF MOMENTUM AND, AT WORST, AS HASTILY DEvised FACE-SAVING FORMULA. THERE IS ALSO DETECTABLE APPREHENSION ABOUT HOW ASAD AND ARAFAT WILL REACT TO WORKING GROUP PROPOSAL AND CURRENT EGYPTIAN POSTURE.
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